



Central Valley Flood Protection Plan

Meeting Summary

Lower San Joaquin Regional Management Actions Work Group Meeting #3

Time: November 9, 2010, 9:00am-1:00pm

Location: San Joaquin Farm Bureau
3290 N Ad Art Road
Stockton, CA 95215

MEETING ATTENDANCE:

Present:

Name	Organization
<i>Carolyn Lott</i>	Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP)
<i>Marc Hoshovsky</i>	Department of Water Resources (DWR)
<i>Mary Matella</i>	American Rivers
<i>Jessica Ludy</i>	American Rivers
<i>John Shelton</i>	Department of Fish and Game (DFG)
<i>Doug Edwards</i>	US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)
<i>Jennifer Hobbs</i>	US Fish and Wildlife Agency (FWS)
<i>Merritt Rice</i>	DWR
<i>Jess Roseman</i>	Tuolumne River Trust
<i>Sandi Matsumoto</i>	The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
<i>Deborah Condon</i>	DWR
<i>Scott Woodland</i>	DWR
<i>Roger Putty</i>	MWH
<i>Julie Rentner</i>	River Partners
<i>Tom Gau</i>	San Joaquin County Public Works
<i>Cait Plantaric</i>	DWR
<i>Dave Peterson</i>	San Joaquin Area Flood Control Agency (SJAFCA)
<i>Noel Lerner</i>	DWR
<i>Sam Magill</i>	CCP

Absent:

<i>Roger Churchwell</i>	SJAFCA
<i>Susan Dell'Osso</i>	River Partners
<i>Mary Hildebrand</i>	South Delta Water Agency
<i>Maria Encinas</i>	City of Patterson
<i>Jim Giottonini</i>	SJAFCA
<i>Kevin Kauffman</i>	Stockton East Water District
<i>Sarah McIlroy</i>	Stantec, Inc.

WORK GROUP ACTION ITEMS/HOMEWORK

ACTION ITEMS:

1. Staff will distribute a Microsoft Word version of the Lower San Joaquin Regional Objectives to Lower San Joaquin Regional Management Action Work Group (Work Group) members for written comments. Members will submit comments by the close of business on Tuesday, November 23rd.
2. Work Group members will contact Carolyn Lott if they would like an individual interview as part of the Phase 2 assessment process.

GROUP RECAP: (meeting highlights for use by Work Group partners in their communications)

The RMAWG convened for its third meeting to discuss management actions and regional objectives for the Central Valley Flood Protection Plan (CVFPP).

The Work Group's purpose is the development of content for the Management Actions Report (Report), a key component for developing the 2012 CVFPP. The Report will identify specific management actions for use in preparing the CVFPP. In subsequent phases of the CVFPP, these management actions will be combined to form regional and systemwide solution sets to address problems surrounding the State Plan of Flood Control (SPFC) and adjacent areas. The Work Group is one of five regional work groups in the Systemwide Planning Area.

MEETING OBJECTIVES:

1. Discuss feedback on MAR and IPS2
2. Outline what the 2012 CVFPP will include
3. Develop list of proposed regional objectives building on Subcommittee initial draft
4. Describe Phase 3 process and opportunities for involvement

SUMMARY:

****ALL PRESENTATIONS AND MATERIALS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT
www.water.ca.gov/cvfmp****

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Carolyn Lott opened the meeting and reviewed the agenda. After brief introductions, Noel Lerner provided opening remarks on behalf of DWR. He reviewed CVFPP progress to date, and noted the next two phases of CVFPP development (Phase 3 and Phase 4) are the most critical parts of the process. In addition to the Phase 2 documents available for review, DWR is preparing a legislatively mandated Progress Report due at the end of the year. A Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the CVFPP Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) was also recently released to Work Group members. Finally, Mr.

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Lerner reported that a Valley-Wide Forum (VWF) will be held December 9th in West Sacramento (1pm-5pm, West Sacramento City Hall) to further discuss the CVFPP process in a large public meeting.

After introductory remarks, Merritt Rice discussed scheduling deadlines and the timeline for completion of the 2012 CVFPP. He noted that there has been public concern that the schedule may be moving too fast, and that staff may not have the time to produce the report they want to. Although specific information on a revised timeline is not available at this time, Mr. Rice noted that staff is reexamining whether they can produce a draft CVFPP by the 2012 deadline, or if the schedule might need to be revised. Mr. Lerner added staff furloughs have had an impact on the timeline and the change in administration may have an impact.

CVFPP Document Update

Joe Bartlett provided an overview of documents associated with the 2012 CVFPP including the State Plan of Flood Control Descriptive Document (SPFCDD), the Flood Control Systems Status Report (FCSSR), a History Document, the Progress Report, the PEIR, the Management Actions Report (MAR), and the Interim Progress Summary #2 (IPS-2). The SPFCDD is complete and pending release in November.

Mr. Bartlett then provided an overview of the MAR and IPS-2, including document organization and content. Work Group comments on the MAR and IPS-2 are due November 12th. The documents were released to Work Group members on November 1st. The appendices (which constitute the bulk of the MAR) were sent out for comment on October 6th. After an overview of the documents, Ms. Lott asked Work Group members for comments. Mr. Rice explained that all Work Group comments submitted after the November 12th deadline will be included in Phase 3 activities, but may not be included in the MAR itself at this time.

Discussion:

- A participant asked whether all of the management actions (MA) are captured in the main body of the MAR or only in the appendices. Roger Putty explained that the summary of all MA evaluations is captured in the body of the MAR; detailed evaluations of each MA are included in the Appendix A.
- Another Work Group member noted that coordination exists between USACE Central Valley Integrated Flood Management Study (CVIFMS) to address any overlaps between USACE efforts and the CVFPP.
- One person noted that early implementation projects (EIP) mentioned in the IPS-2 should be characterized as actions that will take place between 2012 and the 2017 CVFPP update. Mr. Rice agreed with this suggested change.

Overview of 2012 CVFPP

Mr. Rice provided an overview of the 2012 CVFPP, noting that the intent of the presentation was to explain what the expected content of the CVFPP is, and what DWR hopes to accomplish. The presentation included a timeline of FloodSAFE accomplishments, the proposed processes for developing the 2012 and 2017 CVFPP, and a detailed explanation of the expected contents of the 2012 CVFPP.

He explained that ultimately, the CVFPP is expected to provide the roadmap for effective flood management throughout the Central Valley. Although it will not propose site-specific projects in most cases, it will provide a vision for flood management, an implementation framework for flood system improvements (both structural and institutional), and a series of specific recommendations to be taken between 2012 and 2017 (including possible feasibility studies, EIPs, and legislative, policy, or institutional changes). Between 2012 and 2017, there will be a shift from major planning activities to implementing recommendations.

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Discussion:

- A participant asked if there was money in the bond measure pulled from the November 2010 ballot for flood projects, and whether a new Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) would be passed at the federal level to provide money for California flood issues. Mr. Rice explained that a goal of the 2012 CVFPP is to define funding mechanisms for flood improvements in the future. Recent discussions on plans for a WRDA have been tabled at this time. Mr. Lerner added that the funding strategy component of the CVFPP is essential, since it is unlikely that all CVFPP recommendations can be funded using federal money.
- One member asked what the Central Valley Flood System Conservation Strategy (Conservation Strategy) is. Marc Hoshovsky responded that it is a requirement of the Central Valley Flood Protection Act (Senate Bill 5, 2007) and will be designed to describe and maintain the environmental benefits of the flood control system in the Central Valley. DWR will complete the Conservation Strategy by 2017 to meet the requirements of the Act and the vegetation guidelines from the California Vegetation Roundtable.
- Participants raised a concern of whether the 2012 CVFPP can be considered “complete” without the Conservation Strategy in place. In particular, a participant noted that local agencies might implement site specific flood projects based on the strategies laid out in the 2012 CVFPP, while these actions could be in conflict with the Conservation Strategy when it is released in 2017.
- Several participants asked whether public engagement will be included in the Conservation Strategy. Mr. Hoshovsky confirmed that there will be a robust public engagement process. Mr. Lerner noted that the Conservation Strategy will also be integrated with other water/conservation projects in the Delta.
- One participant noted that the integration of environmental benefits and flood protection is extremely important.
- A member asked if the CVFPP will provide guidance to other state agencies involved in flood/ecosystem planning related to flood management such as CalTrans or DFG. Mr. Rice confirmed that it will.
- Another member noted that the 2012 recommendations should not focus only on studying actions with high potential for providing systemwide benefits, as most actions only have a potential for local or regional effects. The concern was that local actions which may collectively support a systemwide perspective could be overlooked in favor of a few very large changes to structures such as the Yolo Bypass. Mr. Rice concurred. Deborah Condon noted that there are some actions that could have local flood benefits, but regional or systemwide incidental benefits such as ecosystem improvements.
- Participants noted that the slides focus on the primary CVFPP goal of providing flood system improvements, but there are other goals including providing ecosystem benefits. Mr. Rice confirmed that there are five goals in total; for the purposes of the slides only the first goal was shown. Ms. Lott stated that the other goals will be included in future phases, and that other benefits will not be traded off for flood protection benefits. Mr. Rice explained that *all* flood improvement projects in the future will need to consider including ecosystem improvements or they won't be approved by permitting agencies.

Overview of Phase 3 Regional Solutions Sets

Mr. Putty provided an overview of Phase 3 activities and regional solution sets. He explained that the SPFCDD and FCSSR will help inform this decision making process. Four solution sets are being considered at this time; each set provides a different focus to flood management. These sets include:

- Restore State Plan of Flood Control (SPFC) design capacity

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- Protect high-risk communities
- Manage the consequences of flooding
- Modify the flood system for enhanced benefits

Mr. Putty noted that these solution sets do not represent “alternatives” as used in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), but instead represent a strategy for flood management that can be applied in concert with other solution sets. For example, in some areas where residential areas back up against levees, the only available strategy could be to build floodwalls (protect high risk communities) while in other areas, setback levees could be built to provide flood and environmental benefits (modify the system for enhanced benefits).

These solution sets will be the focus of Phase 3 of the CVFPP process. Supporting data and technical analysis will be used to apply the solution set approach to subregions or “benefit areas” within each CVFPP region. These solution sets will then be combined into regional solutions for preliminary evaluation and comparison.

Discussion:

- A participant asked if a ranking and prioritization system will be designed as part of the solution set process. Mr. Putty responded that there will have to be some kind of benefit/cost analysis. This analysis could take place in a public workshop similar to the Phase 2 workshops in July and August of 2010. However, given the number of subregions/benefit areas (more than 100 at this time), it is unlikely that there will be a single workshop for each area. It is unclear how the subregions will be combined, but it will be important that each workshop has appropriate representation from that area.
- Another member noted that while the solution sets don't constitute CEQA alternatives, the PEIR process requires that a project description and specific alternatives be defined. Mr. Rice responded that a PEIR team is dealing with this issue, but that there will likely be a “no project alternative” and an alternative outlining all combinations of MAs and solution sets. One participant added that given the programmatic nature of the PEIR, it can display a range of implementation options/activities. These can be considered a range of tools/options for agencies from the federal, state, or local levels.

Regional Objectives

Mr. Putty reviewed the process for defining regional objectives. The objectives defined in Phase 2 focus on the primary goal of flood system improvements; objectives to achieve the supporting goals will be the focus of Phase 3. He went on to explain that the regional objectives (developed by a subcommittee of Work Group members between meetings 2 and 3) are helpful in comparing how well the regional solution sets achieve the CVFPP goals. Staff will send a Microsoft Word version of the Lower San Joaquin Regional Objectives document to the Work Group for written comments (**see Action Item #1**). Before opening the objectives to the Work Group for verbal comments, he asked members to consider two questions:

- Are there specific issues with how the objectives are worded?
- Are there any objectives missing?

Discussion:

- Participants noted that the third bullet of the first objective (“minimize the frequency of flood to achieve the specified level of protection”) should be revised to specify that 100 year protection should be developed where appropriate. Participants noted that in some areas like the proposed “3 Amigos Project” land use can shift to increase flood system capacity and provide environmental benefits.

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- A member noted that identifying where flood/conservation easements exist within San Joaquin and Stanislaus Counties could be helpful for developing regional objectives.
- One person asked whether a project could be removed from consideration if it conflicted with one of the objectives, but not others. Mr. Rice and Ms. Lott suggested that this analysis will happen in the future, and that the objectives may need further refinement as a result. Mr. Putty noted that objectives are typically referred to as something a plan seeks to achieve as opposed to a screening mechanism for specific projects.
- A participant noted that objectives 2 and 3 appear to put protecting life and property on the same level, and suggested that some prioritization activity take place to rank objectives appropriately.
- One member commented that under the example actions for objective 2, (minimize loss of life) relief cuts should not be done without a specific plan in place.
- Another member suggested that objective 2 should include a statement about land use policies as a way to minimize loss of life.
- Participants commented that for objective 4 (reduce damage to critical and community facilities) land use changes and relocating critical infrastructure could be included as a possible action.
- Participants suggested that “the usefulness of infrastructure during a flood” could be included as a metric for objective 4.
- A member asked that “frequency of flooding” be included as a metric for objective 6 (improve flood management system performance in the Calaveras River...).
- One person suggested that “reducing flow constrictions at Dry Creek to operate the reservoir at full capacity” could be a potential action for objective 7 (improve flood management system performance in the Stanislaus, Tuolumne, Mokelumne, and their tributaries).
- All participants suggested that the metrics for objectives 8 and 9 be used for objective 7.
- A participant asked that “integration of other benefits” be included as a metric for objectives 6-9. Mr. Putty and Mr. Bartlett suggested that this could be included as a principle; further discussion is needed.
- One member commented that objectives 10 and 11 from the Upper Sacramento Regional Management Actions Work Group could be included in the Lower San Joaquin objectives.
- The Work Group suggested that all objectives include a metric that speaks to post-flood recovery for urban and agricultural areas.
- A participant said that reference to the Paradise Cut Bypass in objective 9 (improve flood management system performance in the tidally influenced reaches of the San Joaquin River...) should be changed to “Paradise Cut capacity improvements.”
- One member said that the Friends of the Calaveras River should be engaged to refine objective 6.
- A member asked that “partnering with local agencies to develop and *implement* local preferred alternatives” be added to objective 10 (partner with local agencies...). Additionally, he asked that the metrics for objective 10 be modified to speak more about implementation progress. An action should be added to the objective 10 actions to expedite low regrets actions.
- One person suggested staff should look at the regional objectives across the regions and draft a suggested set with consistent language to be considered as the “base” objectives for all regions.

Phase 2 Assessment

Ms. Lott provided an overview of the Phase 2 assessment. Similar to the stakeholder assessment completed for Phase 1, participants were asked to fill out a short survey on the efficacy of the Phase 2 stakeholder engagement process. She explained that a few individuals will be contacted for individual interviews; if Work Group members would like to be interviewed, they were asked to contact Ms. Lott as soon as possible (**see Action Item #2**).

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Closing

Ms. Lott, Joe Bartlett, and Merritt Rice thanked the attendees for participating in the work group meeting and expressed appreciation for their willingness to continue working and supporting Phase 3 efforts. Merritt Rice noted that the CVFPP Project Delivery Team planned to further review and, where appropriate, consolidate the regional objectives and associated matrix from the five regional areas based on the Subcommittee Results and input from the work group meetings. He said that this information would be provided back to the work group members prior to the next regional work group meeting.

DRAFT